

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



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FISHERY ANNOUNCEMENT

COOK INLET AREA PACIFIC COD FISHERY

STATE-WATERS SEASON CLOSURES TO POT GEAR AND

PARALLEL SEASON OPENS TO POT AND LONGLINE GEAR SEPTEMBER 1

EMERGENCY ORDER 2-GF-H-07-13

The Cook Inlet Area (Area H) state-waters Pacific cod season will close to fishing with pot gear effective 12:00 noon September 1, 2013. The parallel Pacific cod season will open to pot and longline gear at 12:00 noon September 1, 2013. The parallel Pacific cod season is established by emergency order (EO) to coincide with the season dates and gear sectors set by National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for the Pacific cod "B" season in the adjacent federal Central Gulf of Alaska Regulatory Area (CGOA). The parallel season will close by EO for each gear type concurrent with federal "B" season closures when gear sector allocations are achieved.

Fishermen are reminded: 1) to obtain a Cook Inlet non-exclusive area registration from ADF&G prior to fishing; 2) of the requirement for fishermen using pot or longline gear in parallel Pacific cod fisheries to have a functioning, activated, NMFS-approved vessel monitoring system (VMS) as described at http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ole/ak_faqs.html and; 3) to adhere to the seabird avoidance measures (SAM) required in all longline fisheries for groundfish in state waters except the Cook Inlet District of the Cook Inlet Area under regulation 5 AAC 28.055 and described at <http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/protectedresources/seabirds/guide.htm>.

Regulation 5AAC 28.350 (b) closes certain waters to groundfish pot gear along the west side of Cook Inlet and within Kachemak Bay. To protect Steller sea lions, waters adjacent to two rookeries within the Cook Inlet Area, Sugarloaf Island and Outer Pye Island, remain closed to fishing for Pacific cod with pot or longline gear. Vessel transit is closed within 3 nautical miles (nmi) of these locations and fishing within 10 nmi of these locations is closed. For more information, consult the NMFS website at <http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/regs/679b22.pdf>.

Bycatch, in aggregate, may not exceed 20% by round weight of the directed groundfish species on board the vessel. Regulation 5 AAC 28.365 requires that all rockfish must be retained and any rockfish bycatch in excess of the 10% rockfish bycatch allowance be reported as bycatch overage on an ADF&G fish ticket. Retained lingcod must measure at least 35 inches from the tip of the snout to the tip of the tail.

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